

**MUSIC** HARD TIMES INSPIRE CITY'S NEW POST ROCKERS **P.3**

**TRAVEL** SPRING PICNIC ON THE BASHANG PRAIRIE **P.5**

**FOOD** CHINESE MEDICINE'S TOP FOODS FOR BEAUTY **P.8**

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# BEIJING TODAY

# ENERGY OF THE PLATEAU

WITH A PORTFOLIO THAT CONSISTS ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY OF FLYING TIBETAN GIRLS AND YAKS, IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE WANG YIGUANG HAILS FROM THE CENTRAL PLAINS. **P.4**





# ENTERTAINMENT



## Dragon Blade Plays Fast and Loose with History



BY DIAO DIAO

Action star Jackie Chan managed to find enough time around bailing out his troublesome son to release a new film at the tail end of the Spring Festival boom. But *Dragon Blade* has been mired in controversy since its premiere last month.

The story is set 2,000 years ago during the Han Dynasty under the reign of Han Yuandi. After years of territorial expansion under Han Wudi, General Huo An has settled brought about a friendly peace with China's western neighbors.

But that peace is shattered when Huo is wronged and sentenced to forced labor at the western end of the empire. There he meets Lucius, a general in the Roman Empire. The two eventually become friends when they uncover a conspiracy between Tiberius, who has eyes on the Roman throne, and Yin Po, Huo's best friend.

The story is new for the big screen, but it failed to deliver on the humor and kung fu stunts that viewers expect to see when Chan is on the screen.

Of course, Chan can be funny even without kung fu. The bigger complaint was the ludicrous way the film kept beating on the theme of "world peace" during a violent period of history defined by imperial expansion and warlordism. The intense cooperation between Rome and China also flies in the face of historical fact.

In spite of spending 400 million yuan to produce the film, Chan failed to please audiences. It's similar to his disappointing appearance in *The Myth* in 2005.

Some viewers said that the film cost so much because it called on A-list Hollywood actors like John Cusack and Adrien Brody.

However, viewers did praise the harmonious visual effect of combining ancient Chinese warriors and Roman centurions on the big screen. Regardless of the quality of the film, the 61-year-old Chan deserves respect for his dedication to film. ■

## Crash Course in Chinese Myth Gets Republished

BY DIAO DIAO

Greek, Roman, Egyptian and Indian myths are often the bedtime stories of children growing up in the Western world. But China has no shortage of its own legends and sagas.

China's stories tend to combine the imaginative and fantastic with ancient bureaucracy and social life. Most follow heroes and heroines on a quest to conquer nature or enact social reform. Such folk stories involving ghosts and fairies were especially popular, as attested by *Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio*, a Qing Dynasty compilation of such stories by Pu Songling.

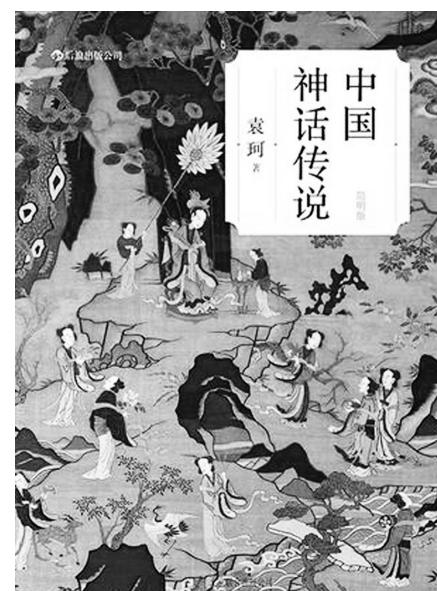
But without a basic framework of Chinese folk tradition and religion, Chinese myth can be difficult to understand. Yuan Ke's recently republished *China's Legends and Sagas* provides a general reader that systematically

introduces Chinese legend.

Yuan is a well-known master of Chinese mythology who has been studying the tradition since 1946 in Taiwan. Yuan returned to Sichuan in 1949 to continue his study and was assigned the president of Chinese Mythology Association in 1984.

His first book, *Chinese Ancient Myth*, broke new ground in 1950 by introducing a systematic approach to studying Chinese myth. He has since published more than 20 books and papers about Chinese mythology, many of which have been translated into other languages and used as textbooks abroad.

The first edition of *China's Legends and Sagas* was published 30 years ago. It has been edited twice to enrich the content. The latest revision removes some of the more complicated explana-



Photos by douban.com

tions and rearranges the stories according to chronological order.

The new edition divides the body of Chinese myth into 132 independent stories.

Yuan read and compared many old documents and used the surviving history as his basis to complete his text. The story begins with Pan Gu, who was said to end the chaos at the beginning of the world, and continues through to Qin Shihuang, the first man to unite China.

The book also introduces the origins of many common literary quotations and idioms.

Unlike factual history books, the story of Chinese myth is presented vividly and through interesting characters. The myth and folk tradition serve as an important tool to help readers learn and better interpret Chinese history. ■



# She Never Sings Our Songs

## Hard but Fun Times



BY DIAO DIAO

**A** common love for "Mary Never Sings Our Songs" by Soft Powers brought together a Web designer, a new media engineer and two editors to form one of Beijing's newest post rock bands.

She Never Sings Our Songs has been touring the city's bars and livehouses since August 2014 with their lyric-free songs and complex melodies.

The band is the project of guitarist Chen Zeyang and bassist Guoji Yixin, better known by her stage name Xiaoguo.

Compared to her fellow band members, Xiaoguo had an early start in music. When the SARS crisis hit China in 2003, her mom took the money that was intended for enrollment in an outdoor summer camp and bought Xiaoguo her first violin.

Six years of classical violin experience helped Xiaoguo discover a special love for instrumental music and post rock. She chose to come to Beijing for college thanks in part to the city's reputation for great post rock bands.

"I heard there were live shows in Beijing every day. But my campus was so far from livehouses and bars. I could only be a fan over Douban," Xiaoguo said.

Xiaoguo founded her first post rock band Lian Su with a few friends she met on Douban's community. It was short-lived, but the breakup brought her together with her future bandmate, guitarist Chen Zeyang.

Chen had a deep interest in live rock since high school. "I couldn't help cheering along with the crowd," he said. "Once we had our own band and our own shows, I realized that music

touches the musician even more than it touches the audience."

A search for likeminded musicians brought the two together with guitarist Ren Baosheng, an amateur instrumentalist and songwriter, and drummer Pu Bonan.

Pu's journey to post rock came by way of heavy metal and Britpop. It was a show by China's most famous post rock group Wang Wen in 2007 that inspired him to shift his focus. "That was the first time I ever saw a post rock band playing live. Even though it was just a rehearsal, I felt overwhelmed," Pu said.

But Beijing's indie scene has changed significantly since 2007. Today's band lists are dominated by Britpop and hard rock acts.

"It's not that we want to be different. Post rock has just become really rare to see in Beijing indie scene," Xiaoguo said. "We just want to pour as much emotion into our compositions as possible. That's what we've done in our seven-minute song 'W-circle.'"

With its varying structures, "W-circle" is an emotional journey that the members spent months to rehearse, write, revise and rewrite. Although it contains clashing themes, the song is a story of its own creation through tough times and creative blocks.

Xiaoguo describes the months spent on that song as an infinite circle of failure without any ray of success. "There's a lot of pain that goes into instrumental expression, but that's where the fun and achievement lies," she said.

The band is currently recording its debut EP for release later this year. They are hoping to incorporate some jazz, electronic and vocal elements into their post rock songs. ■



Photos by She Never Sings Our Songs

## LIVE SHOW ROUNDUP

Beijing boasts one of the world's most vibrant indie music scenes. Support our local artists with a trip to one of this week's live performances!

### Punk Spring @ Snakepit

Punk bands are gathering at the Sanlitun She Ci Live House to celebrate a spring of indie music. The celebration will last two days and include 15 bands from around the country.

⌚ April 10-11, 8 pm

📍 7F Snakepit, Sanlitun, Chaoyang

🎫 100 yuan (pre sale), 120 yuan (at door), 180 yuan (early bird)



### SU乐队

World Fusion

Line-up:

Voice: 夏布

Guitar: 亚森

Bass: 米拉丁

Keyboard: 任思恩

Percussion: 小艾

### Su Band @ D.D.C Club

Su Band is a group of Uyghur musicians. Su means the origin of water in Uyghur language and the band wants their music to be equally pure and clean. Su Band plays a combination of flamenco, Bossa Nova, pop and jazz. They are quiet and enthusiastic musicians who have been recognized at many Chinese music competitions since their founding in 2006.

⌚ April 12, 9 pm

📍 14 Shanlao Hutong, Dongcheng

🎫 30 yuan (pre sale), 40 yuan (at door)

### Bingguo Band @ DMC Punk Club

Bingguo Band was founded by three students at Communication University of China. The band plays punk, hardcore and metal. They tend to favor the melodies of older metal and core rock and worship the attitude of punk. Yiwai Chongtu, TLR and The GT bitches will also join the party.

⌚ April 12, 7-10 pm

📍 68, Yunjing Nandajie, Tongzhou

🎫 Free

### The Seven Mile Journey @ Yugong Yishan

The Seven Mile Journey is from Denmark. Founded in 1999, the band has made only four albums but all of them are rated higher than 9 points on most Chinese music sites. Their music shows the maturity that comes from pain and pressure.

⌚ April 11, 9-11:30 pm

📍 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng

🎫 80 yuan (pre sale), 120 yuan (at door)



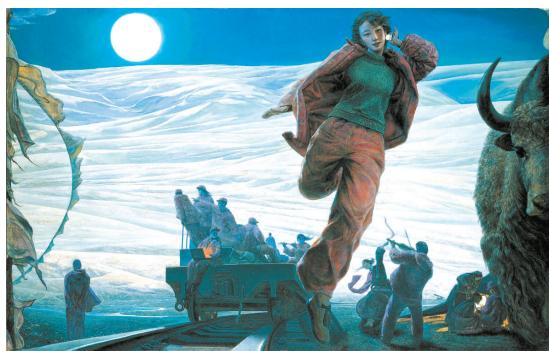
# ARTISTS



## Capturing the Energy of Life on the Tibet Plateau



After Rain



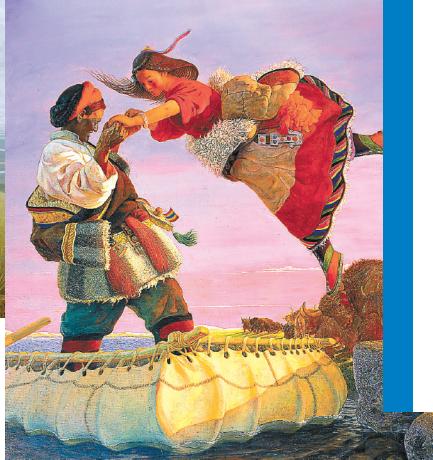
Full Moon Over Tanggula



Beyond the Heavens Photos by Wang Yiguang



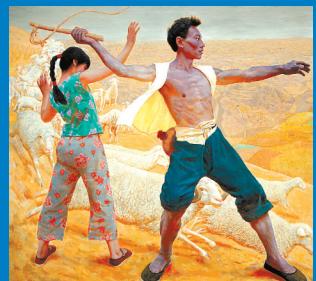
Silent Communication



The Sun Rises on the Nagchu River



Swallow Flying in Autumn



Road Home

BY LYNNE WANG

It's hard to imagine that the Tibetan inspired art of Wang Yiguang is the work of a man who grew up on the North China Plain. Tibet's vigorous yaks, winding railways and cheerful girls have become the main body of Wang's creation since he first set foot on the magical plateau in 2002.

Unlike his Tibet-obsessed peers who focus on the scenery of the Tanggula Mountains and highland prairies, Wang expresses his love for the plateau through super-realist images of flying animals and Tibetans living in a dreamy and harmonious environment.

"I believe in animism and have always tried to find an appropriate way to express it through the interaction between humans and nature. But the way escaped me until I came to Tibet," Wang says.

Born in 1962 in Linyi, Shandong province, Wang grew up with two artistic brothers and started to paint in middle school. When the Cultural Revolution ended and education resumed in 1977, Wang sat China's first college entrance exam and was admitted to a local art school. He was assigned to work as an art teacher in Shandong province in 1980.

"To be honest, the reason I chose art as my major was because I just wanted to stay in the city. But the more I painted, the more I became fascinated with the art," Wang says. After graduating from the Central Academy of Fine Arts with a master's degree in oil painting in 1988, Wang became a graphic designer at the China Railway Construction Corporation.

The majority of Wang's earlier works were realist paintings that displayed the daily life of villagers prior to the 1990s. But slowly, his work began to morph into neo-realism that combined the power of reality and the romance of imagination. The shift became obvious after he participated in the construction of Qinghai-Tibet Railway in 1992.

In the *Fragrance of Kelsang Flowers*, Wang depicts a local girl opening her arms and flying into the sky over a sea of highland flowers. The view of the yak's back makes it seem the carefree girl is sharing her happiness with the creature.

The combination of Tibetan girls and yaks appear in many of Wang's other works such as *After Rain*, painted in 2004, and *Silent Communication*, painted in 2014. Wang is obsessed with the poetic comparison between the Tibetan girls and the yaks, creatures with powerful energy and life force.

"The first time I went to the Tibetan Plateau I fainted due to altitude sickness and oxygen deficiency. The only thing I could do during my first couple days was lie on the grass and gasp for air," Wang says. "But local kids and yaks could play so freely and happily around me. They were like the Flying Apsaras of the Dunhuang Frescoes. That physical reaction let me admire the power of life on the Tibetan Plateau."

Construction workers on the Qinghai-Tibet Railway are also an important theme in Wang's work. In *Full Moon Over Tanggula*, painted in 2005, Wang captures the conditions of railway workers at the foot of snowcapped mountains. The glow of sunset and dancing locals offer a warm and cheerful sense.

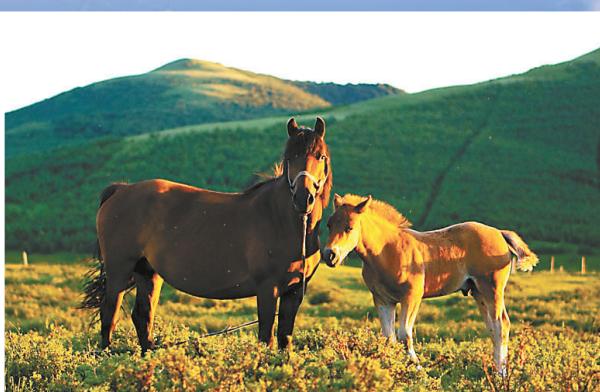
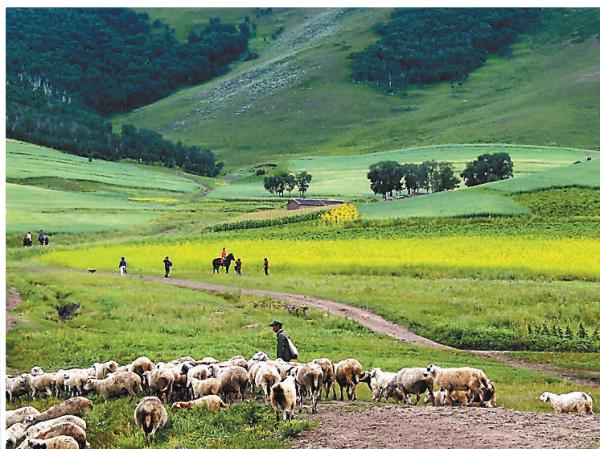
"The Qinghai-Tibet Railway, construction workers and daily life on the plateau are the ore of my art. Strong artistic language can only come from the combination of the right artistic approach and the ability to capture life's details," Wang says. ■

wangyidong.com/wangyiguang/shouye.html



# Plan a Picnic to the Bashang Prairie

BY WANG LINGXIAO



**S**pring and summer should be the seasons of life, but Beijing's hazy and dusty air tends to keep people inside or hidden behind filtration masks.

If you're up for braving the air, this is the best season to take a wonderful weekend trip to some of the vast prairies of northern China where the temperatures are pleasant and the air is fresh.

One of the nearest is the Fengning Bashang in Chengde, Hebei province. It's a short 260-kilometer trip from the Dongzhimen bus station.

## Bashang Prairie

The Bashang Prairie is often praised as the "first prairie" of the north. It offers beautiful views and abundant flora and fauna from May through October.

Wild flowers decorate the green meadows and serve as food for the many wild animals that make their home on the prairie. During the Dragon Boat Festival, the meadow is an important stopover for migrating larks.

Horse riding is one of the most popular activities. It costs about 50 yuan per hour to rent a horse. For people who live in the city, riding a horse across the meadows is the closest one can come to returning to a more natural pace of life.

Local riders occasionally use the meadow for races. If you're confident enough in your equestrian skills you can sign up to compete with them.

## Source of the Luan River

The Lightning River Wetland Park is about an hour's driving from Fengning Bashang Prairie. Admission to the park costs 60 yuan.

It is the source of the Luan River, a natural ribbon that cuts across the green land and softens the wide prairie. Scenes of the river are a popular topic for photography fans in the capital. The scenery varies significantly throughout the day and offers a lot of opportunities for anyone with a good understanding of lighting.

## Palace of Genghis Khan

In spite of its name, this palace was built in memory of Genghis Khan rather than used by the famous Mongol ruler. The palace marks a stopover before the Battle of Zhongdu, where Genghis Khan led his horde to victory over the Jurchens in Beijing. The battle marked the beginning of his conquest of Han China.

The palace is designed according to Mongolian culture. Scattered yurts, campfires and Mongolian dancers add to the experience.

The Palace of Genghis Khan lies midway between the Bashang Prairie and Lightning River Wetland Park. It's about 18 kilometers from the prairie and tickets cost 90 yuan.

Aside from the Palace, the surrounding fields are a good place to snap photos of the blooming cole flowers. ■

(Wang Lingxiao is an intern at Beijing Today.)

## Transportation:

Follow the Jingcheng Highway to the Huairou exit. Turn onto the Jingmi Highway and leave from Yanqihu. Exit to G111 North and continue to Tucheng Town, then turn left onto provincial road S244. Continue straight ahead until you arrive at Fengning Bashang.

Take a long-distance bus from Liuliquiao Station to Fengning Station. Switch to the bus to Datian when you arrive at Fengning.

## Tips:

- Fengning Bashang Prairie has an average altitude of about 1,800 meters. The wind is strong and the temperature varies between extremes. Bring warm clothes.
- You will need thick trousers and socks - possibly even riding boots - if you want to avoid hurting yourself when riding a horse.
- The sunshine is strong and lasts late into the evening. Come prepared with hats, sunglasses and sunscreen.
- Prairie weather is unpredictable. Bring an umbrella.
- Pack some foods and drinks so you can have a picnic lunch with your family or friends. You can also pack a small kite if you want to try flying one on the grassland.



Photos by mafengwo.cn & CFP & baidu.com



# Slip-Ups and Anime-Speak

BY DIAO DIAO

This week we picked a few popular words that were coined by verbal stumbling gone viral or borrowed from anime.



## Hold Zhù

“Hold zhù” (hold住) has its origins in a slip-up by Xie Yilin. The actress was attempting to introduce “what is fashion” in both English and Chinese on a popular Taiwanese entertainment show.

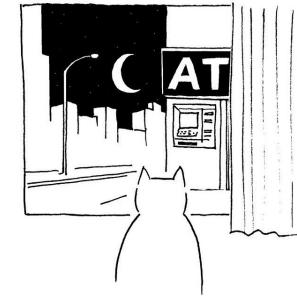
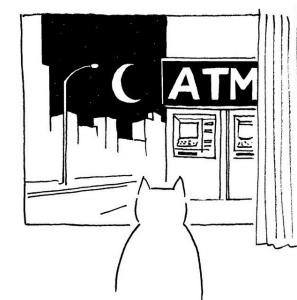
While describing an embarrassing moment, she said “It’s alright. I hold zhù.” The video was viewed more than a million times and “hold zhù” became an overnight catchphrase. It’s now used as a set phrase of encouragement.

## Cūnpào

Originally used to describe people who always seem to be 10 steps behind the current fashion, *cūnpào* (村炮) has evolved into an adjective to rib anyone for being behind the times.



## WEEKLY TANGO



TAN/w

Tango studies at Tsinghua University's Academy of Art and Design.

For more comics, follow his Sina Weibo feed at @tangocartoon.

# Ask Beijing Today

“Ask Beijing Today” is our weekly column that attempts to make life in China less confusing.

You can email your own questions to [ask@beijingtoday.com.cn](mailto:ask@beijingtoday.com.cn).

## Q. Can I take a motorcycle on the ring roads or expressways?

A. It all depends on your plate number. If it's 京B, you cannot drive within Fourth Ring Road. Some motorcyclists will advise that you stay away from the highways to avoid poorly trained drivers. If you have a B plate or an out-of-Beijing plate, you can drive outside the Fourth

Ring but not on the main lanes of other ring roads.

**Q. I've been saving all my used batteries for the past year. I don't want to throw them into a regular garbage bin. Is there some sort of recycling center I can bring them to?**

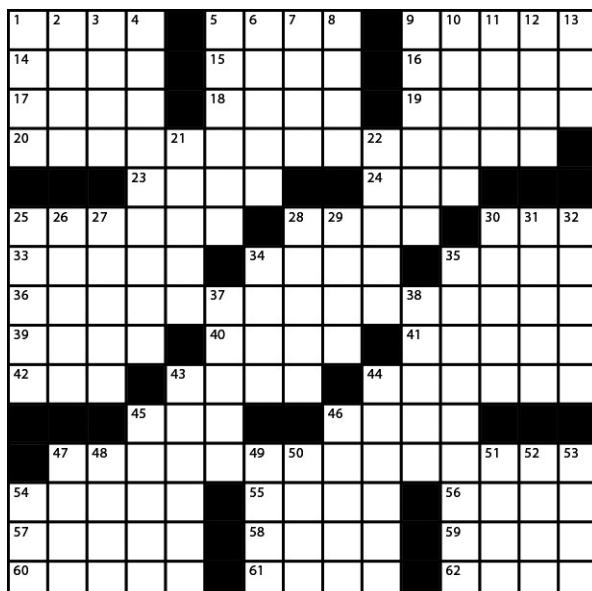
A. We appreciate your effort at environmental protection. We asked someone at the environmental department and they said there has been no need to recycle AA or AAA batteries since 2006. They can be discarded along with household garbage. Other batteries like the rechargeable ones and large-storage batteries do require recycling. You can find a list of eligible recy-

cling centers on the website of the Beijing Environmental Protection Bureau.

**Q. I was wondering whether it's possible to enroll in a doctoral program here and still work as a teacher on my working visa. I know that student visas exist, but I cannot change my visa because I am working for a school and have a two-year contract.**

A. We know of one person who has been working here for 11 or 12 years and went through a Ph.D. at Minzu University of China at the end of 2013 with no problem. It's probably possible for you to do this. You may need to submit an application form to the Exit-Entry Administration. ■

## THE BEIJING TODAY CROSSWORD



## BY SU DERUI

**Across**  
1. “\_\_ sesame!”  
5. Troublesome old ladies

9. Oxford doctorate  
14. Sorta  
15. Leave out  
16. Dissolve out  
17. Not of the clergy

18. Whirlybird  
19. 100 percent  
20. Pertaining to the method of writing  
23. Shore bird  
24. “Jeepers!”  
25. British P.M.  
28. Construction beam  
30. Distress signal  
33. Snoops  
34. Noggin  
35. Wind catcher  
36. Communist emblem  
39. Hip bones  
40. Ultimatum ender  
41. Mentioned  
42. Family man  
43. Extracted from moon bears  
44. Liquids  
45. Ash holder  
46. Gather  
47. Like Marvel's Silver Surfer  
54. Newlywed  
55. Muddleheaded (pinyin)

56. Require  
57. Bordered  
58. Biblical paradise  
59. Took a right  
60. Russian rulers  
61. Social misfit  
62. Nimble  
**Down**  
1. Scandinavian capital  
2. Orchard fruit  
3. Give off  
4. Beijing greeting (pinyin)  
5. Pup  
6. Arab bigwigs  
7. Red giant in Cetus  
8. Perched on  
9. Rule breaker  
10. Moxie  
11. Luau dance  
12. “\_\_ cost ya!”  
13. Romanian coin  
21. Corpulent  
22. Coin-toss call  
25. Garden pest  
26. Musical syllables  
27. Bashful  
28. Nervous  
29. Commanded  
30. Wife of Siva  
31. Lubricated  
32. Winter vehicles  
34. Concert venue  
35. Observations  
37. Restraints  
38. Estuary  
43. Engenders  
44. Fruitful  
45. Milk source  
46. Silencer  
47. Eye part  
48. One of Columbus' ships  
49. In the past  
50. Boorish  
51. Horn sound  
52. Ogle  
53. Whirlpool  
54. Deli sandwich

Send your completed crossword within two weeks to get our next two issues mailed out for free!

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## Last Week's Solution (No. 719)





# CLASSIFIEDS

## DINING



### Exquisite Hangzhou Specialties at Noble Court

With its distinguished thousand-year history, Hangzhou, the capital and largest city of Zhejiang Province, is a popular tourist hot spot and historical city known for its West Lake. It's also a culinary paradise with a large number of delicious specialties. Behind these dishes are beautiful stories linked with historic figures of the city.

This spring, go on a Hangzhou culinary journey at Noble Court restaurant presented by a guest chef team from the Hyatt Regency Hangzhou. Their cooking techniques illustrate the best of Hangzhou's unique cuisine, and their modern presentations showcase a selection of delicious, homey dishes such as braised "Dongpo" pork served with chestnut pancakes and poached marble goby in sweet vinegar sauce.

⌚ 11:30 am - 10 pm, April 13 to 22  
 ↗ Noble Court, B1/F, Grand Hyatt Beijing Hotel, Oriental Plaza, 1 Dongchang'anJie, Dongcheng  
 ☎ (010) 6510 9024  
 📩 [beijing.grand.hyatt.com/en/hotel/dining.html](http://beijing.grand.hyatt.com/en/hotel/dining.html)



### Hilton Beijing's 'Flavors of Mexico' Food Festival

Hilton Beijing and the Embassy of Mexico are pleased to announce "Flavors of Mexico," a food festival presented by Mexican Chef Eduardo Perez from April 16 to May 1 at the award-winning One East and Elements at the Hilton Beijing.

During the two-week festival, guests will be able to enjoy authentic Mexican food at lunch and dinner prepared by Chef Eduardo Perez and Hilton Beijing Executive Chef Andreas Bruck. Other festival events include Tequila tastings, salsa dancing classes and a salsa competition.

"Flavors of Mexico" is an exciting occasion to enjoy the full variety of Mexican cuisine and the wealth of indigenous ingredients which has resulted in one of the most dynamic and well-established

culinary traditions in the world. In recognition, Mexican cuisine was declared "an intangible cultural heritage of humankind" by UNESCO in 2010.

⌚ 10 am - 10 pm, April 16  
 ↗ Hilton Beijing, 1 Dongfang Lu, Dongsanhuai BeiLu, Chaoyang  
 ⚡ 148 yuan  
 ☎ (010) 5865 5125  
 📩 [laura.wang@hilton.com](mailto:laura.wang@hilton.com)

## COMMUNITY



### 2015 Bohai or Bust Charity Bike Festival

Get ready to ride in the 6th annual Bohai or Bust Charity Bike Festival! The Schoolhouse is proud to announce that it will be hosting yet another fantastic ride through Bohai Township to help raise money for the elderly in its small community. This year's participants will get to enjoy the same spectacular Mutianyu Great Wall backdrop that they have in years past while riding along one of the Schoolhouse's three self-guided bike trails, but it has made some changes to the event this year.

The event will be held at The Brickyard Retreat, where participants will be able to take advantage of washroom facilities and a spa before and after the ride. Post-ride festivities include a live-band, locally grown food, a raffle and a silent auction. Some of this year's prizes include stays at the Waldorf Astoria and the Four Seasons.

⌚ 7:30 am - 5:30 pm, April 18  
 ↗ The Brickyard Inn and Retreat Center at Mutianyu Great Wall, Huairou (100 meters south of YingbeigouCun)  
 ⚡ 176 yuan per adult;  
 126 yuan per student or child  
 ☎ (010) 6162 6506  
 📩 [bohaiorbust.org/boben.html](http://bohaiorbust.org/boben.html)

## MUSIC



### Suffocation: The Godfathers of Brutal Death Metal

The lords of the Brutal Death Metal

Empire are going to take you to the Pinnacle of Bedlam! Long Island's Suffocation is regarded as the founder of this extreme metal empire. For more than 20 years, Suffocation has been setting the genre standard. Their fusion of technicality, grooves and sheer unrelenting brutality has been imitated but never duplicated.

Delivering a truly devastating display of technical death metal bordering on grindcore, Suffocation broke through to the underground metal masses with their first full-length assault, *Effigy of the Forgotten*, in 1991. Suffocation surpassed themselves on "Pierced From Within." Fast, intricately technical, immaculately heavy and well produced, "Pierced From Within" is an extreme metal landmark that can't be ignored.

⌚ 8 pm - midnight, April 23  
 ↗ Yugong Yishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng (100 meters west of Zhangzizhong Lu subway station)  
 ⚡ 360 yuan, 280 yuan (advance)  
 ☎ (010) 6404 2711  
 📩 [info@yugongyishan.com](mailto:info@yugongyishan.com)  
 📩 [painkillermag.com/mag/?p=915&lang=en](http://painkillermag.com/mag/?p=915&lang=en)

## CULTURE



### Scratching Beijing Presents The Fourth

A 'Scratch' is a style of theatre introduced from the UK that has been making a creative mark on the Beijing art scene. Scratch Night is a new multi-disciplinary event that invites artists to join creative forces and put on a show. Artists have been scratching up ideas over spring festivities and are ready for the fourth show.

Join this creative bunch with an open mind and forgiving ears as artists get experimental in spoken word, poetic sound, art installations and new theatre pieces. Pieces may contain some necessary strong language.

Scratching Beijing has been weaving its way around different city venues. This time in Gulou it will be taking over the popular venue bar 4corners.

⌚ 9 - 11 pm, April 14  
 ↗ 4corners, 27 Dashibei Hutong, Xicheng (near west end of Yandai Xiejie)  
 ☎ (010) 6401 7797

## ART



### Superhorn Swiss Twist @ Crowne Plaza Beijing Sun Palace

Learn about Swiss folklore as presented by the Swiss Globetrotters at Crowne Plaza Beijing Sun Palace from April 13 to 17. The performance celebrates 65 years of bilateral relations between China and Switzerland. Crowne's Chef Tony will be preparing splendid Swiss foods, the highlights of which include chocolate fondue, Raclette, Rosti, Fleischtorte, Pearl Barley Soup and chocolate desserts.

Come for the buffet dinner at Red Orange from April 13 to 17 (288 yuan with free soft drinks) or BBQ buffet dinner at the outdoor marquee on April 15 (458 yuan with free beer, juice and soft drinks). Aspire and IHG Dining Rewards members can enjoy a 20 percent discount. Call for bookings and enquiries.

⌚ 6 - 9:30 pm, April 13 to 17  
 ↗ Red Orange, 1/F, Crowne Plaza Sun Palace Beijing, 12 Qisheng ZhongJie, Beisanhuan Dong Lu, Chaoyang  
 ⚡ 288 / 458 yuan  
 ☎ (010) 6452 1608;  
 (010) 6429 8888 ext 6320

### Titan's Feast: Zhang Zhaoying Art Project

EGG Gallery is proud to announce Zhang Zhaoying's Art Project Titan's Feast, which opened March 14.

In this multi-medial, theatrical artwork, artist Zhang Zhaoying adopts a method of expression that he refers to as "reclaiming the space." The viewer is presented with an adapted European tale in which a giant named "Titan" is taken prisoner by a Lilliputian kingdom. The artist uses this story to reflect on altered social states brought about by human interaction and cannibalistic urges. Since the visual language of painting alone cannot convey this odd story with sufficient clarity, the artist utilizes a multi-layered method of "reclaiming the space." He organically combines painting, installation and video in a quasi-operatic format to express his artistic views in a more comprehensive way.

⌚ 10 am - 6 pm, March 14 to April 14  
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# HOLIDAY FOODS

## Healthy Foods for Beauty

BY DIAO DIAO

Where foreigners turn to vitamins, Chinese turn to food therapy: especially women who are vulnerable or concerned about their beauty.

Chinese medicine claims that there are a great variety of foods that have a positive effect on female beauty. The most popular are yams, jujubes, almonds, brown sugar and goji berries, also known as wolfberries.

Yams are believed to protect kidney health, according to traditional medicine. The kidneys and their associated meridians are considered one of the most important elements in a woman's body. Yams contain glycoprotein and other proteins that improve skin elasticity and fight aging. They are also believed to cleanse the lungs – a concern for anyone living in the capital. Yams are usually boiled in porridge or steamed; they are also skewered and used to make sweet tang-hulu during winter.

Jujubes are well known for their nutritional value. They are often folded into steamed bread or eaten in Laba porridge, a traditional food of the Laba Festival. They can also be soaked in baijiu or other strong alcohol to make drunken dates, a popular treat in northern China. Red jujubes contain more proteins and vitamins than their green

cousins, but both are believed to enrich blood. Red jujube is a common ingredient in women's healthcare products.

There are two kinds of almonds, and both are considered a health aid unless you eat too many. Sweet almonds can be eaten directly as a good source of unsaturated fatty acids. They are popular in summer because of their purported whitening effect. Many trace elements in sweet almond can also aid in weight loss. Bitter almond is used in medicines to fight coughs and clean the lungs.

Goji berries are a precious medicine and nutritional supplement. They are believed to "brighten" the eyes and soothe the nerves. Orange goji berries also contain natural carotene that improves the skin and eyes. People usually add individual berries to their porridge or tea.

Brown sugar is made of pure sugar cane. Since it is not refined, brown sugar contains all the other nutritious elements of cane sugar. It is easier for the body to absorb and contains many essential elements like calcium and iron that are lost during a woman's menstrual period. Women often drink ginger water sweetened with brown sugar to fight off menstrual cramps. ■

### MAKE YOUR OWN WITH THIS RECIPE

## Learn to Make Laozao Egg Soup

BY WANG YAN

Laozao is a pudding-like fermented rice soup popular in Chinese cuisine. It is made of fermented glutinous rice with 1.5 to 2 percent alcohol and 0.5 percent lactic acid. Sweet and delicious, it is believed to improve circulation and relieve menstrual troubles.

Some also believe laozao can boost breast size since it contains numerous hormones. When laozao is mixed with eggs it becomes laozao danhua tang, a great alternative to your usual snack.

(Wang Yan is an intern at Beijing Today.)



Photo by blog.sina.com.cn

#### Ingredients:

- 500g rice
- qujiu (buckwheat liquor)
- 3 eggs
- brown sugar

#### The Steps:

1. Add the rice to a rice cooker. Add enough water to cover the rice and cook it using the automatic setting.
2. Remove the fully cooked rice and transfer it to a large mixing bowl. Allow it to cool.
3. Add the qujiu to the bowl and combine it with the rice.
4. Wrap the mixing bowl with a warm cloth and keep it at a temperature of 33-35 C.
5. Allow the rice to ferment for two days. It may take longer if the weather is cold.
6. Add the fully fermented rice and water to a pot and heat over a high flame.
7. Crack an egg and add it to the pot once the soup comes to a boil. Use a large spoon to stir the egg and prevent it from sticking. Repeat with the other two eggs.
8. Turn off the fire when the eggs float.
9. Sweeten with brown sugar according to preference.



CFP Photos

## Hong Zhuang Yuan, Beijing's Best Congee

BY WANG YAN

Beijing's air is notoriously dry and polluted. It's extremely important to take extra steps to protect your health. Eating healthy is every bit as important as wearing a face mask.

In China, you cannot skip congee if you want to talk about eating healthy. There are a number of congee restaurants in Beijing, but Hong Zhuang Yuan is probably the best.

Founded in 1992, the restaurant has 35 chain locations throughout the city. Most look like a warehouse from the outside and a barn from the inside.

Hong Zhuang Yuan serves 11 kinds of congee with its most famous being the popular preserved egg and pork congee. The dish is a classic Chinese congee with thick rice porridge, lean pork and sliced century eggs.

In spite of their name and frequent appearance on foreign "weird food" lists, China's century eggs hardly merit revulsion. The eggs are coated with a mixture of clay, ash and quicklime for several weeks to utilize a chemical reaction that turns the yolks creamy and the protein-rich whites firm.

Zhuang Yuan Jipin Zhou is the chain's most expensive congee. With baby shrimp, crab and red medlar, a single bowl costs 23 yuan. The oat, jujube and yam congee is advertised as the restaurant's healthy choice.

Although the restaurant is known for its congee, it also serves dim sum, stir-fried vegetables, rice and noodles. ■

(Wang Yan is an intern at Beijing Today.)



Zhuang Yuan Jipin Zhou



Oat, jujube and yam congee



Egg and pork congee Photos by dianping.com

### Hong Zhuang Yuan

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